04
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RATED TEEN
DAVID PEPOSE
JONATHAN LAU
SPACE GHOST
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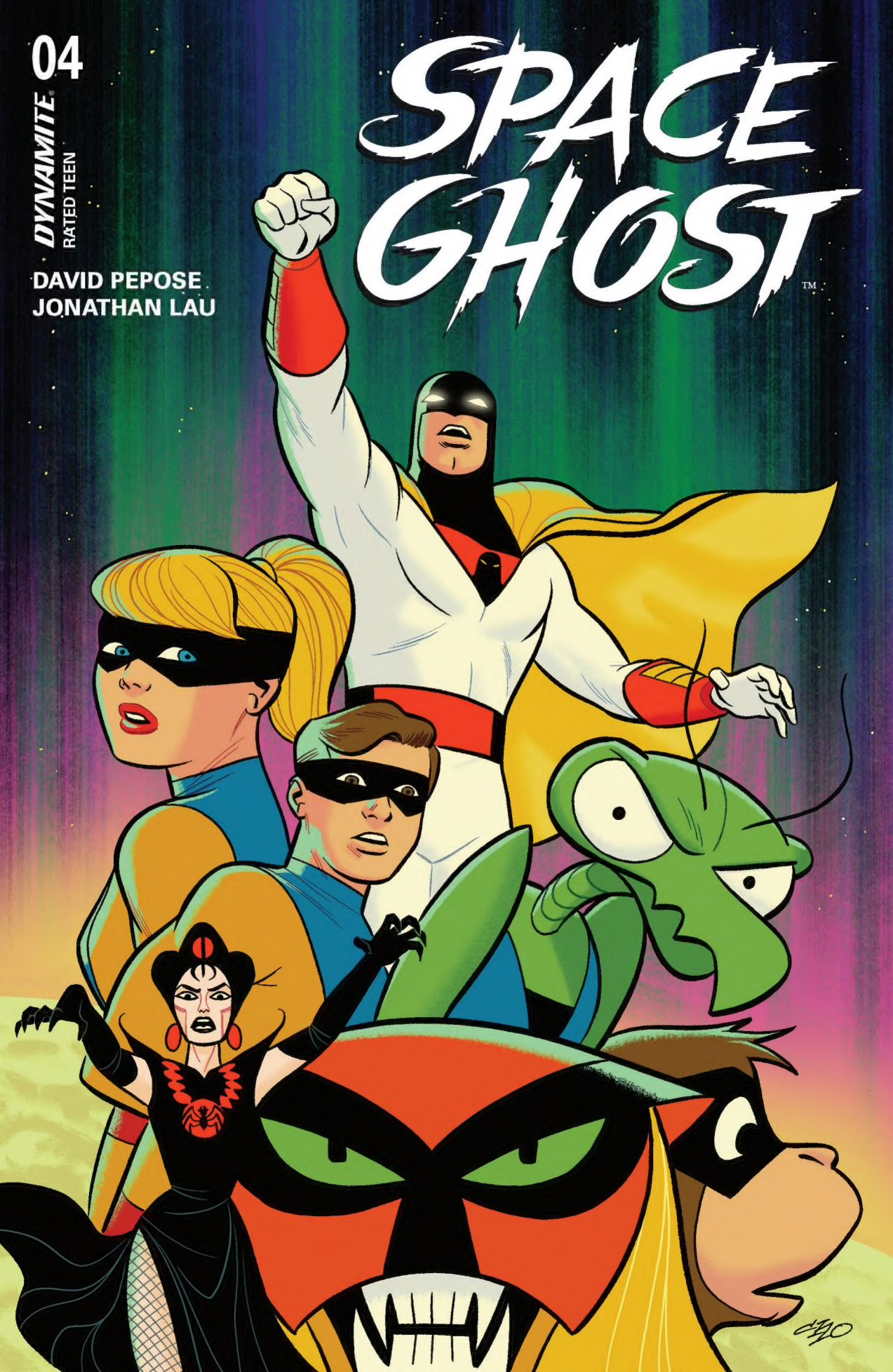
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Across the vastness of space, evil flourishes in the darkness between stars. With territories spread far and wide across the Galactic Federation, pirates and hijackers have ransacked these distant colonies with cruel disregard for the innocent scientists living within them.

Yet there is a cosmic vigilante who metes out justice across the spaceways, bringing vengeance to those who prey upon the defenseless.

They call him the...

SPACE GHOST™

DAVID PEPOSE
WRITER

JONATHAN LAU
ARTIST

ANDREW DALHOUSE
COLORIST

TAYLOR ESPOSITO
LETTERER

FRANCESCO MATTINA
COVER

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SPECIAL THANKS TO JOSH ANDERSON AND BENJAMIN HARPER

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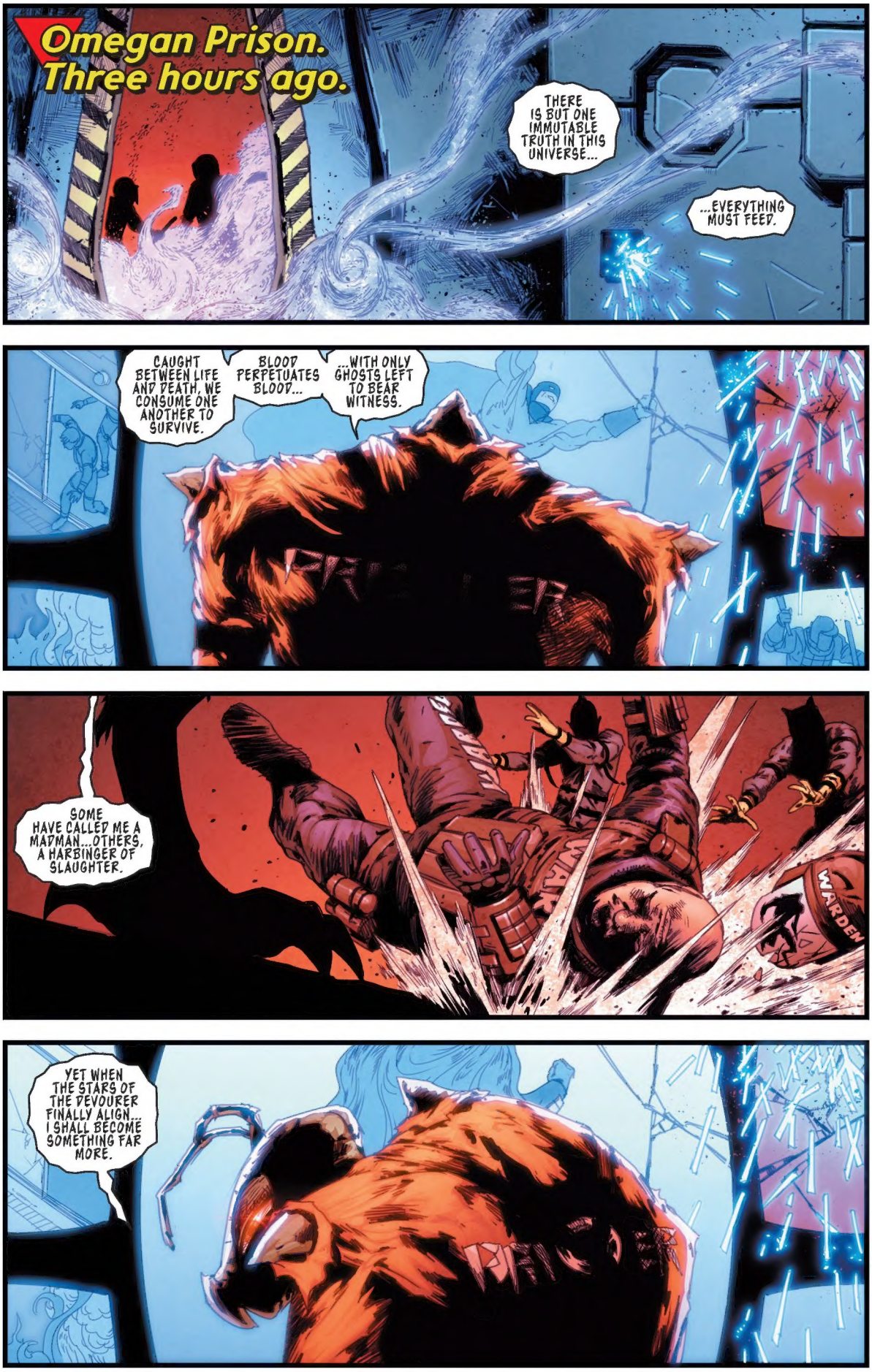
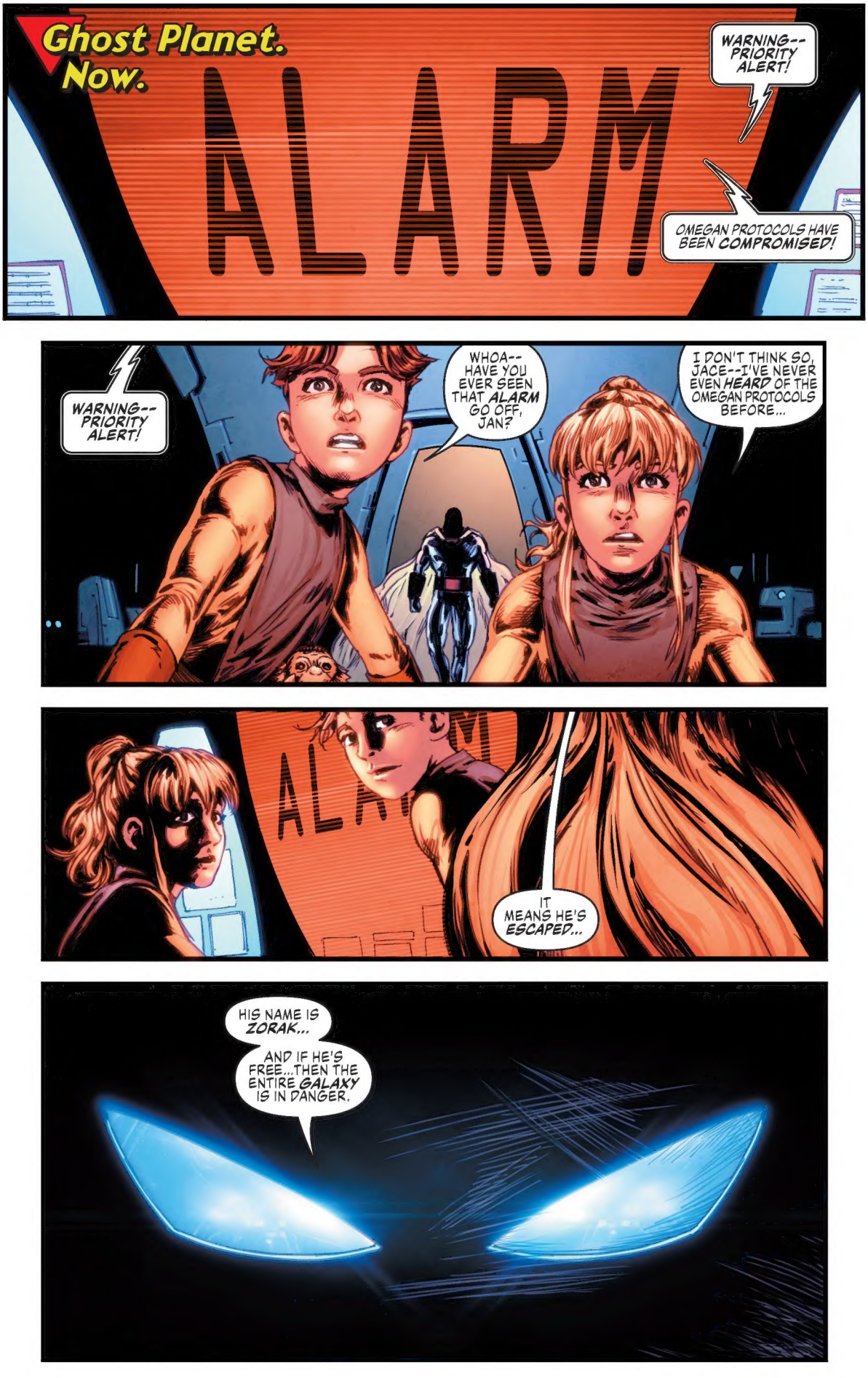
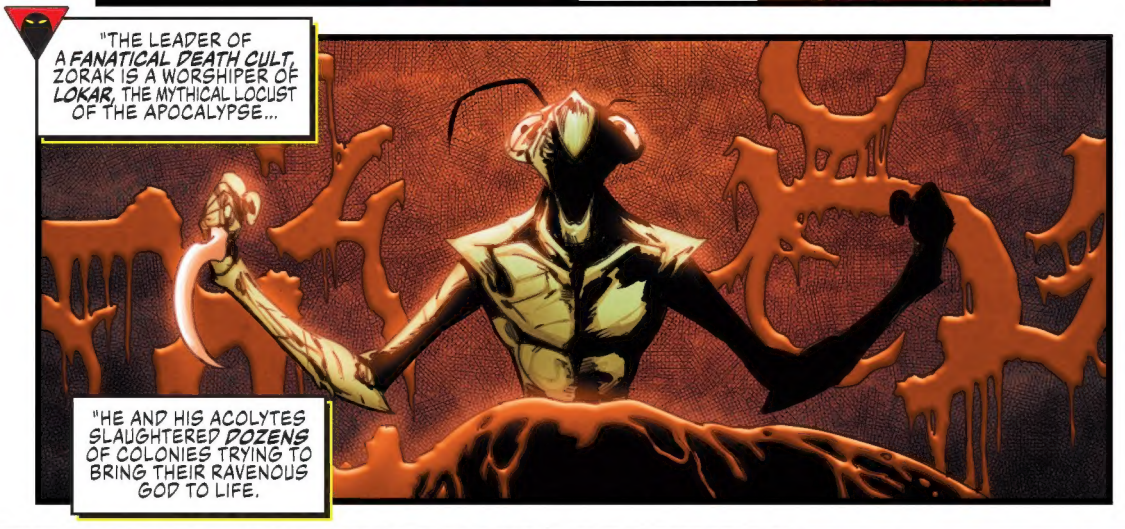

Omegan Prison.
Three hours ago.
THERE IS BUT ONE IMMUTABLE TRUTH IN THIS UNIVERSE...
...EVERYTHING MUST FEED.
CAUGHT BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH, WE CONSUME ONE ANOTHER TO SURVIVE.
BLOOD PERPETUATES BLOOD...
...WITH ONLY GHOSTS LEFT TO BEAR WITNESS.
SOME HAVE CALLED ME A MADMAN...OTHERS, A HARBINGER OF SLAUGHTER.
WARDEN
YET WHEN THE STARS OF THE DEVOURER FINALLY ALIGN... I SHALL BECOME SOMETHING FAR MORE.

I AM THE PROPHET. I AM THE WORD.
I AM ZORAK...

SHAKK
AND OUR MESSAGE SHALL NOT BE DENIED.


Ghost Planet. Now.
ALARM
WARNING-- PRIORITY ALERT!
OMEGAN PROTOCOLS HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED!
WARNING-- PRIORITY ALERT!
WHOA-- HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THAT ALARM GO OFF, JAN?
I DON'T THINK SO, JACE--I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF THE OMEGAN PROTOCOLS BEFORE...
IT MEANS HE'S ESCAPED...
HIS NAME IS ZORAK...
AND IF HE'S FREE...THEN THE ENTIRE GALAXY IS IN DANGER.

I DON'T GET IT, SPACE GHOST-- WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT THIS ZORAK CHARACTER?
HE'S NOT A PIRATE OR A CRIMINAL LIKE THE OTHERS, JAN...
ZORAK IS A TRUE BELIEVER... AND THE MOST SADISTIC ENEMY I'VE EVER FACED.

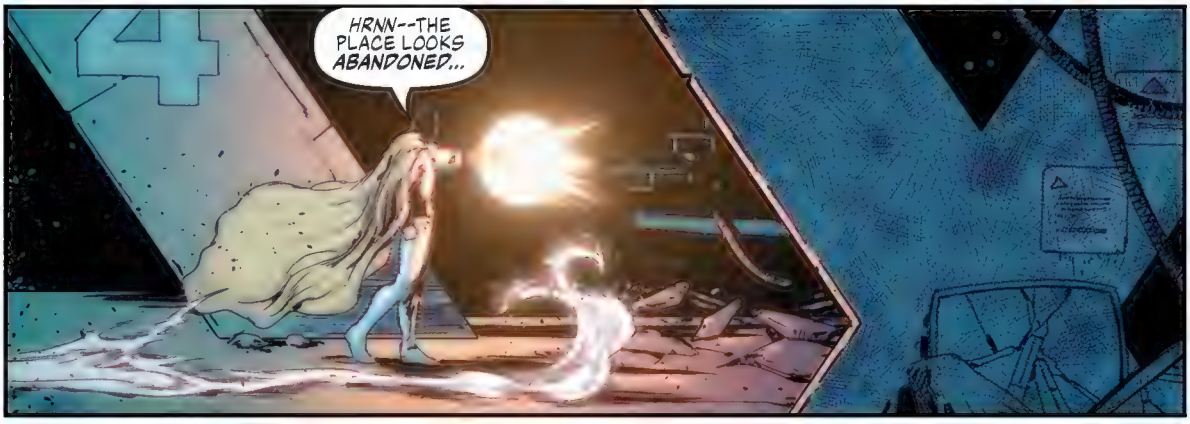

"THE LEADER OF A FANATICAL DEATH CULT, ZORAK IS A WORSHIPER OF LOKAR, THE MYTHICAL LOCUST OF THE APOCALYPSE...
"HE AND HIS ACOLYTES SLAUGHTERED DOZENS OF COLONIES TRYING TO BRING THEIR RAVENOUS GOD TO LIFE.

"WHEN I FINALLY TRACKED HIM DOWN, ZORAK AND I SPENT HOURS TEARING AT EACH OTHER...
"IT WAS ONLY BY SHEER LUCK THAT I HELD OUT LONG ENOUGH TO STOP HIM."

SURE, BUT THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW, S.G.--YOU'VE GOT ME, JAN, AND BLIP!
WE'LL TRACK HIM DOWN, AND THE FOUR OF US'LL THROW THIS CREEPY CRAWLER RIGHT BACK TO JAIL--!
YOU'RE STAYING HERE, BLAST IT!
I...I'M SORRY, KIDS...
BUT ZORAK IS FAR TOO DANGEROUS FOR YOU.
I'M LEAVING FOR THE PLANET BELLEROPHON TO SEARCH HIS LAST HIDEOUT--YOU THREE WILL STAY ON GHOST PLANET UNTIL I RETURN.
BUT, SPACE GHOST--WE CAN HELP YOU!
THIS ISN'T UP FOR DEBATE, JAN...

"DISOBEY MY ORDERS, AND YOU WON'T JUST BE FIRED...
"...YOU'LL NEED TO FIND A NEW PLACE TO LIVE."

Planet Bellerophon.
Later.
VOOOOOOOOM


HRNN--THE PLACE LOOKS ABANDONED...

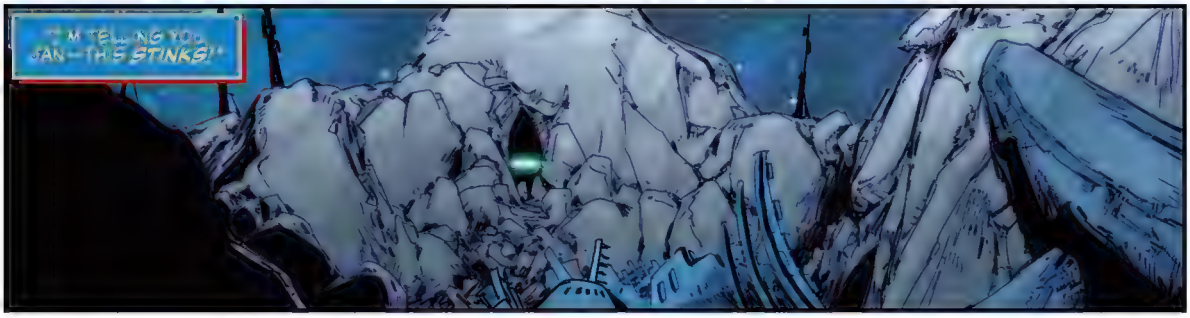
...BUT YOU AND I KNOW EACH OTHER TOO WELL, ZORAK...
YOU NEVER COULD RESIST RETURNING TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME.

WHAT IS IT YOU'RE PLANNING NOW, YOU MANIAC...?

AND WHY DOES IT FEEL SO MUCH BIGGER THAN BEFORE?

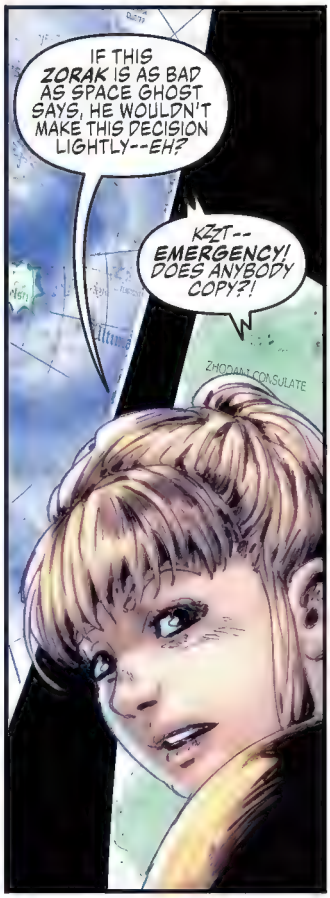
NOTHING LEFT BUT STARCHARTS AND MADNESS...
A GRUESOME SHRINE TO "HE WHO DEVOURS."
THE WAY THEY'RE TRACKING THESE CONSTELLATIONS-- IT FEELS LIKE A COUNTDOWN...
BUT A COUNTDOWN TO WHAT, EXACTLY...?
A PITY YOU WON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO FIND OUT, SPACE GHOST!
NNF!
YOU JOURNEYED HERE TO STOP THE GREAT PROPHET ZORAK...
...BUT HIS WORD IS NOT FOR THE LIKES OF NONBELIEVERS.

NOW YOU FACE THE MACHINE-HERALD OF THE DEVOURER...
YOU SHALL PERISH BEFORE THE JUDGMENT OF TITANOR!


I'M TELLING YOU, JAN--THIS STINKS!"

THE SHEER NERVE OF THAT GUY--I CAN'T BELIEVE SPACE GHOST BENCHED US!
LIKE WE'RE A PAIR OF TODDLERS WHO NEED A BABYSITTER OR SOMETHING!
I HEARD YOU THE FIRST DOZEN TIMES, JACE--HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED HE MAY BE RIGHT?

AH, C'MON, SIS--WHY DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO TAKE HIS SIDE?
BECAUSE ONE OF US HAS TO BE RESPONSIBLE--YOU'RE LESS MATURE THAN BLIP!
SKREEE?


IF THIS ZORAK IS AS BAD AS SPACE GHOST SAYS, HE WOULDN'T MAKE THIS DECISION LIGHTLY--EH?
KZZT-- EMERGENCY! DOES ANYBODY COPY?!
ZHODANI CONSULATE

PZOW
PZOW
SHRAKK
SHRAKK
PZOW
THIS IS THE HADRON COLLIDER ON GRAX-3, HAILING THE GALACTIC PATROL...
...PLEASE, SOMEBODY HELP--OUR FACILITY IS BEING ATTACKED!

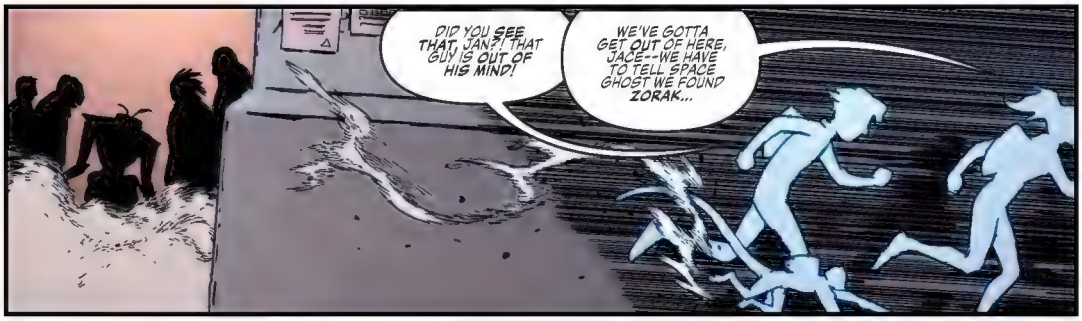
SPACE GHOST, THIS IS JAN--CALLING SPACE GHOST!
IT'S NO USE...
"THERE MUST BE SOME KIND OF INTERFERENCE... I'M NOT GETTING ANY SIGNAL!"
WHAT DO WE DO, JACE? SPACE GHOST TOLD US TO STAY HERE--BUT GALACTIC PATROL WON'T MAKE IT IN TIME...
YEAH, I KNOW WHAT HE SAID--BUT HE WOULDN'T WANT INNOCENT PEOPLE TO GET HURT, EITHER!
BUT HOW WOULD WE EVEN GET TO GRAX-3? SPACE GHOST TOOK THE PHANTOM CRUISER!
WELL, YOU KNOW I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THAT SIDE PROJECT FOR AWHILE...?
MAYBE THIS IS THE PERFECT TIME TO TRY IT OUT.
"FINE--THEN GET BLIP BUCKLED UP, AND BE READY TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING...
VOOOOOOOOOOOOM
"TIME TO FIND OUT HOW FAST THIS SPACE COUPE OF YOURS REALLY IS!"

"AND WHEREVER SPACE GHOST IS... LET'S PRAY HE DOESN'T CATCH US."
DID YOU THINK YOU COULD ESCAPE FROM ME, HERETIC?!
THUM
I WOULDN'T DREAM OF IT, YOU BIG METAL ZEALOT...
...NOT BEFORE I SEND YOU TO THE SCRAP HEAP!

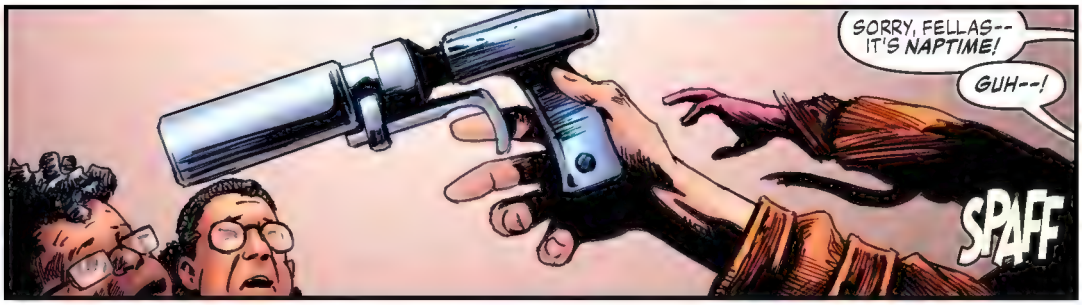
C'MON--FALL, BLAST YOU...
SHZZ
ZARRAAAK
KZZT--SYSTEMS CALIBRATING...
ENERGY LEVELS AT 700%.
NOW TELL ME, SPACE GHOST...
...WHAT WAS IT YOU WERE SAYING ABOUT THE SCRAP HEAP?
NYAAARGH!

Grax-3.
"EVERYBODY STICK TOGETHER--WE CAN'T AFFORD TO DO ANYTHING RECKLESS..."
REMEMBER, SPACE GHOST GAVE US THESE INVISO-BELTS FOR A REASON...
OUR GREATEST WEAPON IS THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.
YEAH, JAN, I KNOW THE PLAN--WE FIND THE HOSTAGES AND GET OUT FAST...
...BUT WHO IN THE GALAXY IS CRAZY ENOUGH TO TRY AND HIJACK A HADRON COLLIDER?
PLEASE, JUST LISTEN TO ME--I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU PEOPLE ARE DOING THIS...
OH NO...

BUT WHAT YOU'RE ASKING FOR, IT CAN'T BE DONE--IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
NOT IMPOSSIBLE, DOCTOR CORVAC...BUT PROPHECY.
WITH THE STARS OF THE DEVOURER UPON US, WE SHALL USE YOUR COLLIDER TO TEAR A RIFT IN THE UNIVERSE...
AND UNLEASH THE ALL-CONSUMING HUNGER OF LOKAR, LOCUST OF THE APOCALYPSE!
Y-YOU'RE INSANE...
EVEN IF LOKAR WERE REAL, THE ENERGY NEEDED TO CREATE A WORM-HOLE WOULD BE UNIMAGINABLE--!
SHZRAKK
NO--!
THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG, DOCTOR...
ONCE OUR PLAN IS COMPLETE, WE'LL HAVE ALL THE POWER WE'LL EVER NEED.
WHUMP
WHUMP


DID YOU SEE THAT, JAN?! THAT GUY IS OUT OF HIS MIND!
WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE, JACE--WE HAVE TO TELL SPACE GHOST WE FOUND ZORAK...

BUT WE NEED TO GET THESE SCIENTISTS CLEAR FROM THE STATION FIRST--YOU AND BLIP READY?
WE WERE BORN READY, SIS...
PRISONER


SORRY, FELLAS--IT'S NAPTIME!
GUH--!
SPAFF

WHAT ON EARTH--?!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, MA'AM--MY BROTHER AND I ARE HERE TO RESCUE YOU.
DON'T WORRY--WE'LL HAVE YOU ALL FREE IN JUST A SECOND, GANG...

TH-THANK YOU--THEY SAID THEY WERE GOING TO KILL US...
NOT WHILE WE'RE ON THE JOB--EH?
SOUND THE ALARMS!
THE PROPHET ZORAK WARNED OF INVISIBLE FORCES CONSPIRING AGAINST US...
LET US TEACH SPACE GHOST THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS!
SHRAKK
SHRAKK
SHRAKK
SPLAKK
SPLAKK
GYAHH--!
SPLAKK
JAN, LOOK OUT--!
JACE, IT'S RADIOACTIVE DYE--THEY SHORTED OUT OUR INVISO-BELTS!
AND JUST THREE OF US VERSUS AN ARMY OF CULTISTS--BOY, SPACE GHOST WAS RIGHT...

"MAYBE WE SHOULD HAVE STAYED ON GHOST PLANET AFTER ALL."
YIELD, NONBELIEVER!
THOOM
I'LL NEVER SUBMIT TO THE LIKES OF YOU!
DON'T LET UP ON THEM, JAN--THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM!
SHRAKK
SHRAKK
I'M TRYING, JACE--BUT MY BLASTER IS RUNNING OUT OF CHARGE!
OHW
FOOLISH HUMAN--THE SCRIPTURE OF ZORAK IS PREORDAINED!
THOOM
WE'RE BEING OVERRUN!
BLIP--GET OUT OF HERE WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
SKREEE!
THOOM
IF YOU CANNOT EMBRACE THE PROPHET'S WISDOM...THEN I SHALL BE FORCED TO BURY YOU!

IT IS AS WE SAID, LORD ZORAK--WE HAVE CAPTURED THE *HERETICS!*
NO, YOU WITLESS CRETIN--THIS ISN'T SPACE GHOST...

...THESE ARE MERELY HIS ACOLYTES.
I'VE SEEN YOUR EXPLOITS FROM THE SHADOWS, LITTLE HUMANS--BUT DID YOUR MASTER TELL YOU ABOUT ME...?

"...DID THE GREAT SPACE GHOST TELL YOU WHAT HORRORS ZORAK IS CAPABLE OF?"
RNNK
RRNN--DID YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD KILL ME, MONSTER...?

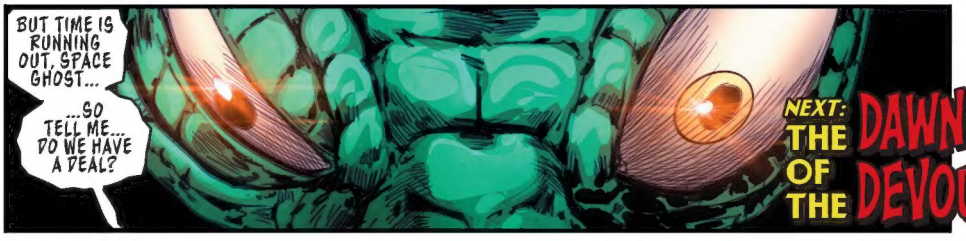
"THE NOBLE FOOL THOUGHT HE COULD PROTECT YOU FROM THE TRUTH..."
"...AND IN HIS ARROGANCE... HE HAS DELIVERED ME THE KEYS TO HIS DOWNFALL."
NO--!
KRAKOOOM
IF I'M DEAD AND BURIED, TITANOR...
THEN YOU'RE GOING DOWN WITH ME!
IF I WERE YOU, CHILDREN, I WOULD START PRAYING TO WHATEVER GODS YOU BELIEVE IN...
"...BECAUSE IF THERE IS ANYTHING THE DEVOURER CONSUMES FIRST... IT IS HOPE."

KRK
KRK
KRK
RRAAARGH!
S-SYSTEMS ERROR--KZZT!
Y-YOU MAY HAVE WON THIS BATTLE, SPACE GHOST... BUT THERE CAN BE NO LIFE W-WITHOUT DEATH...
NOT ONCE MY M-MASTER'S PLAN STANDS R-R-REVEALED.
YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT, ROBOT... WHERE'S ZORAK?
N-NOT EVEN YOUR EH-CHILDREN WILL ESCAPE THEIR FATE...
ONCE LOKAR, THE DEVOURER IS REBORN...
H-HA--YOU SHOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT... BECAUSE SOON, ZORAK WILL F-FIND YOU...

ENOUGH OF YOUR INSANITY--LOKAR IS JUST A MYTH!
TELL ME WHAT ZORAK IS PLANNING, BLAST IT!
KZZT--SPACE GHOST, DO YOU COPY?
BOOM
THIS IS SPACE GHOST--WHAT DO YOU NEED, JAN?
I...I'M SO SORRY, SPACE GHOST...
WE COULDN'T STAY BEHIND--THERE WERE HOSTAGES ON GRAX-3...
BUT I SWEAR TO YOU...WE DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS HIM.
WHAT HAPPENED, JAN--ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
AH, THERE IT IS--I MISSED THE DESPERATION IN YOUR VOICE...
DO YOU RECOGNIZE ME, OLD FRIEND? YOUR CHILDREN ARE STILL INTACT...
...AND SO THEY SHALL REMAIN...SO LONG AS YOU DO EXACTLY WHAT I WANT.

ZORAK... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
IT'S NOT WHAT I'VE DONE THAT MATTERS...
...BUT WHAT I AM ABOUT TO DO.

THESE ARE MY TERMS--I WILL GRANT YOUR YOUNG ASSOCIATES MERCY...
...AND ALL I REQUIRE IS YOUR SUBMISSION... AND YOUR ALL-POWERFUL BANDS.


BUT TIME IS RUNNING OUT, SPACE GHOST...
...SO TELL ME... DO WE HAVE A DEAL?
NEXT: THE DAWN OF THE DEVOURER!

NEXT ISSUE

In this action-packed issue, Space Ghost, Jan, Jace, and Blip face the horror that is Zorak and the Cult of Lokar! With Zorak seizing the upper hand, the Guardian of the Spaceways is faced with an impossible battle - one whose shocking ending will leave a permanent mark on everyone involved!

Award-winning author DAVID PEPOSE (Punisher) and superstar artist JONATHAN LAU (Vampirella Strikes) double down on the danger and triple down on the excitement with Space Ghost #5 - all enhanced by stunning covers from FRANCESCO MATTINA, JAE LEE & JUNE CHUNG, BJORN BARENDS, and MICHAEL CHO!

THE TERMINATOR TRAVELS BACK IN TIME FOR NEW COMICS!

SUPERSTAR DECLAN SHALVEY (THUNDERCATS) SHARES HIS APPROACH!

Declan, first you tackled *ThunderCats* with us, you've done *Alien* elsewhere, and now you're taking on another massive classic franchise in *The Terminator*. What draws you to these beloved stories?

Ha, well being offered them is the first hurdle!

Seriously though, they're all franchises that are familiar and exciting to me for various reasons. *ThunderCats* was more of a childhood passion, but both *Alien* and *Terminator* hit the tone and mood that I lean into more naturally. It's really a win/win for me in that I get to write the type of stories I like, but get to take advantage of established worlds and rules and play around in them. All these franchises are very visual too, which appealed to me as an artist, so I have a strong visual sensibility of my own going in and they're great opportunities to work with artists who have strong visual storytelling chops, which is endlessly engaging for me.

With *Terminator* especially, editor Nate Cosby does a great job in coming to me not just with a franchise book, but a clear idea of what he's looking for. To write a *Terminator* book is of course, such a cool opportunity — but knowing *what* the book is (or isn't) gives me a clear roadmap to work with.

The original *Terminator* film was such a massive success and influence for fans and filmmakers. It was one of the next steps in the evolution of big blockbuster moviemaking, with a big cast, big effects, and more. How much of that explosive energy are you trying to capture in this comic series?

To be honest, not much! We're taking a more ground-level approach to the series. As innovative and groundbreaking as the first film was, it was also grounded in its environment, being noirish and moody as hell. An unstoppable force is coming to kill you — that's the element of the franchise I want to lean into. More about characters that find themselves faced with this futuristic monstrosity rather than all the lore and continuity that comes with it.

Beyond the Terminators themselves, obviously the franchise also has memorable human characters. Can you introduce us to some of the cast in your story? Will it be anyone we recognize, or new faces?

Pretty much all new faces, the only real recurring face will be that chrome skull we all love so much. The approach of this series is new situations, new dilemmas in each issue. Mostly done-in-one stories, but as the series progresses there may be some recognizable faces...

A big part of the *Terminator* mythos is its unique new takes on the robots. Should fans be looking forward to new designs from artist Luke Sparrow or yourself?

Yes *and* no. We're going for a more stripped-down, pulpy approach to the book. The T-800 is the true scare of the book, so that is mainly what we will be dealing with. As to *who* the Terminator is, that is another question. The strength of the book really will lean on the strength of Luke's overall character design, making each new human form of the Terminator believable and threatening, and I have full confidence that he's going to nail that.

Speaking of Luke, he's an up and coming artist, and this series is likely to be his big debut to a lot of fans. As a renowned artist yourself in addition to your writing, how has it been working with him and seeing his art come along?

After admiring his work for a long time, I had the benefit of recently working with Luke on a short story for my own book, *Old Dog*. It was a great way to see how we'd work together, and his pages were so impressive, I knew I really wanted to keep working with him. Around that time this *Terminator* project came up, so I suggested him to editor Nate Cosby and everything has clicked since. Luke has a fantastic eye for believable characters and environments, which is really the glue that will hold the book together. There's a lot of worldbuilding in his pages, a lot of great, subtle touches that make everything so believable. Each issue will give him a great opportunity to really show what he can do, and I can't wait for everyone else to see it. Colin Craker is also a great artist that I know is going to channel a lot of atmospheric color onto Luke's inks.

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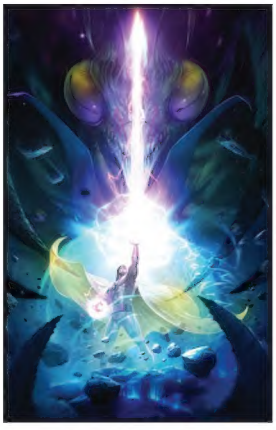

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